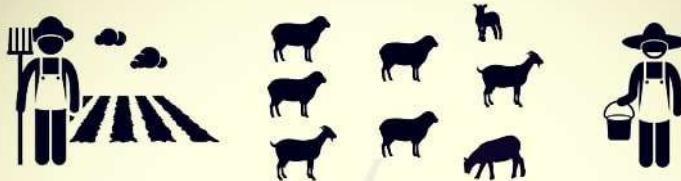


EXPLANATION OF THE HADEETH: TO FLEE FROM AFFLICTIONS TO PROTECT ONE'S RELIGION

At a time when many are trying to relocate for a better opportunity



Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:



يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرَ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِ غَنِمًا يَتَبَعُهَا شَعَفَ
الْجِبَالِ وَمَوَاقِعَ الْقَطْرِ، يَفْرُّ بِدِينِهِ مِنَ الْفِتْنَ

“A time will soon come when the best property of a Muslim will be sheep which he will take on the top of mountains and the places of rainfall (valleys)

SO AS TO FLEE WITH HIS RELIGION FROM AFFLICTIONS.”

[Saheeh al-Bukhaaree (19, 3300, 7088)]

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ، وَبَعْدَ

Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said: «A time will soon come when the best property of a Muslim will be sheep which he will graze on the tops of mountains and the places where rain falls, fleeing to protect his religion from afflictions.»

What follows herein the explanation of the above Hadeeth from the following three books:

1. Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhaaree by Shaikh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen رحمه الله
2. Sharh Riyaadh al-Saaliheen by Shaikh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen رحمه الله
3. Fiqh al-Da'wah fee Saheeh al-Imaam al-Bukhaaree

HADEETH:

Narrated Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudree رضي الله عنه: Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said: **“A time will soon come when the best property of a Muslim will be sheep which he will graze on the tops of mountains and the places where rain falls, fleeing to protect his religion from afflictions.”**

[Saheeh al-Bukhaaree (19, 3300, 3600, 6495, 7088)]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said: The statement of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ: **“the tops of mountains”**, (meaning: places which are isolated).

And his ﷺ statement: **“places where rain falls”**, meaning: valleys, pastures, plains, etc.

And his ﷺ statement: **“fleeing to protect his religion from afflictions”**, meaning: if he were in a town or a city, and he fears for himself, then he should depart with his sheep to the mountain tops, and places where it rains, fleeing, so as to protect his religion from afflictions.

And his ﷺ statement: **“Soon it will happen”**, meaning: in the near future, and this has happened during the turmoil between `Alee Ibn Abee Taalib رضي الله عنه, and Mu`awiyah Ibn Abee Sufyaan رضي الله عنهما, and incidents which took place after them. Some of the people secluded and stayed away from all these Fitna.

One learns from this Hadeeth, that it is obligatory and more important for a person to protect his religion than to protect the luxuries for the body (i.e., good food, luxurious house, expensive cars, etc.). Perhaps in chasing these luxuries, there is harm.

So, O Muslim, be keen to protect your religion, even if you had to live in the valleys with the sheep among trees, stones, and shrubs.

[Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhaaree by Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (1/70)]

Al-Fitan: singular: Fitnah: the original meaning of the word Fitnah means, “to burn”, “to purify gold and silver by smelting them”. It is frequently used to mean: trials which are disliked. It is also frequently used with the meaning of: al-Kufr (disbelief), killing, burning. It is also extended to mean causing one to enter into fire and into a state of punishment or affliction. Thus, one says that something caused one to enter al-Fitnah, i.e., trial, affliction (in particular as a means of testing someone's endurance), distress, hardship etc., or more generally, an affliction whereby some good or evil quality is put to the test. The sum total of its meaning in the language of the Arabs is: “an affliction whereby one is tried, proved or tested.” It is also used with the meaning: to tempt, to seduce, to allure, to infatuate.

The lessons that are learned from this Hadeeth:

1. From the signs of Prophethood is to inform about some of the matters of the unseen or the future events.
2. One of the topics of Da`wah is to warn against al-Fitan.
3. One of the ways to deal with Fitnah is to flee from it, especially when one does not have the means to correct it or to remove it.
4. Virtue of intermingling with people when there is no fear of Fitnah.

1. From the signs of Prophethood is to inform about some of the matters of the unseen or the future events:

Imaam al-Bukhaaree has narrated this Hadeeth five times in his Saheeh, and one such place where he mentioned it is under: “Book (61): Virtues and Merits of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. Chapter (25): The signs of Prophethood in al-Islaam”. He (Imaam al-Bukhaaree) used this narration to show a miracle from the many miracles of the Prophet ﷺ, i.e., the advent of some of the Fitnah about which the Prophet ﷺ had already informed beforehand. Al-`Ainee رحمه الله said: “In this Hadeeth there is news that during the last days there will be Fitnah (trials and afflictions) and Fasaad (corruption) amongst the people, and this statement of the Prophet ﷺ is one of the miracles given to him.”

Among these Fitnah is what took place between the Companions رضي الله عنهم of the Fitnah, and this is why Imaam al-Bukhaaree also reported this narration under: “Book (92): Afflictions and the End of the World”

Among these Fitnah is what took place between the Companions رضي الله عنهم of the Fitnah, and this is why Imaam al-Bukhaaree also reported this narration with other Ahaadeeth on Fitnah and what took place amongst the Sahaabah, under: “Book (92): Afflictions and the End of the World”.

So, when a Daa`ee (caller towards Allaah) speaks about the miracles of the Prophet ﷺ, then such statement of the Prophet ﷺ, where he spoke about the matters of the Unseen and future events, are to be mentioned among the miracles given to him ﷺ.

2. From the topics of Da`wah is that one should warn against al-Fitan:

A Da`ee should speak about al-Fitan and warn against them – especially when the Fitnah increases and there is confusion amongst the people. In such instances, it becomes all the more necessary to make the people aware of its dangers, and the harm it will cause to a person and his religion.

It is also necessary to raise awareness of such Fitna because the people will face afflictions, and they will be put to trials in this world and will be tested, so that the good people are differentiated from the wicked, as Allaah تَعَالَى said:

﴿مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَقّاً يَمْيِيزُ الْخَيْثَ مِنَ الطَّيْبِ﴾

{Allaah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good.}

[Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 179]

And He تَعَالَى also said:

﴿أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنَّ يُتْرَكُو أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ﴾

{Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested.}

[Surah al-Ankaboot (29): 2]

And He تَعَالَى also said:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً﴾

{And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial, etc.) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong (but it may afflict all the good and the bad people)}

[Surah al-Anfaal (8): 25]

And He تَعَالَى also said:

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَبَلُوْكُمْ بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةٌ وَإِنَّا تُرْجَعُونَ﴾

{Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good, and to Us you will be returned.}

[Surah al-Anbiyaa (21): 35]

And He also said:

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

{Your wealth and your children are only a trial, whereas Allah! With Him is a great reward (Paradise)}

[Surah al-Taghaabun (64):15]

And He also said:

﴿إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةٌ تُضِلُّ إِلَيْهَا مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَهْدِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ﴾

{It is only Your Trial (O Allaah!) by which You lead astray whom You will and keep guided whom You will.}

[Surah al-A`raaf (7): 155]

And He also said:

﴿وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتُهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا﴾

{And whomsoever Allaah wants to put in Al-Fitnah [error, because of his rejecting the Faith], you can do nothing for him against Allaah.}

[Surah al-Maaidah (5): 41]

3. One of the ways to deal with Fitnah is to flee from it, especially when one does not have the means to correct it or to remove it:

The primary element to deal with Fitnah is flee from it, go into seclusion, avoid the people, and distance oneself from them. This is especially when one cannot rectify the situation, correct the affairs, enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and cannot be patient or withhold himself from falling into Fitnah (temptations).

Al-Kirmaanee ﷺ said: One of the benefits one learns from this Hadeeth is: “The merit of Isolating oneself during the times of Fitnah; unless one has (the authority or) the means of removing it (example: the ruler or a scholar). In such a case, (if he has the means) then it becomes an obligation upon him to strive in removing the Fitnah, it can be an individual responsibility (Fardh ‘Ain) or a collective one (Fardh Kifaayah), depending upon the situation and possibilities. But apart from this, when there is no fear of Fitnah, then the scholars have differed whether isolation is better or mixing with the people is better.”

[al-Kawaakib al-Duraaree (1/111)]

And al-Kirmaanee further said: “And I say, it is preferred in our times that one isolates himself as a means of protection from falling into sins.”

[al-Kawaakib al-Duraaree (1/111)]

And al-‘Ainee quoted the statement of al-Kirmaanee and said: “I agree with him in what he has said because in this era of ours, mixing with the people (during the times of Fitnah) brings nothing except evil.”

[‘Umdatul-Qaaree (1/163)]

Ibn al-Hajr said: “The narration is evidence about the merit of isolating oneself when one fears for his Deen”.

[al-Fath al-Baaree (13/42)]

From this, we say to the Muslims, to take every precaution against Fitnah. Precautions against falling into Fitnah or aiding someone in it. But if one has the means to rectify the situation between the people, then he should strive to remove the Fitnah. When one has the means to remove the Fitnah, then it becomes an individual obligation or a collective obligation (by seeking help of others) – depending upon the situation – in removing the Fitnah.

4. Virtue of intermingling with people when there is no fear of Fitnah:

In what has preceded, it was explained the merit of isolating oneself and avoiding mixing with people during the Fitnah when one does not have the means to correct the situation or remove the Fitnah. But as for the times when there is no Fitnah, and there is no fear for corruption in the Deen, then the scholars differed in what is more virtuous, isolation or mixing with the people. Majority are of the opinion that it is better to mix with the people and to avoid isolation.

Al-Kirmaanee ﷺ said: “The Madhab of al-Shaafi‘ee and the majority is that they preferred mixing with the people, because of the many benefit it contains, and to establish the Symbols of al-Islaam (Salaah, Siyaam, Hajj etc.), and to add to the main

body of the Muslims (i.e., to increase the numbers), to spread goodness among them by visiting the sick, following the funerals, spreading the salutation of Salaam, enjoining good, forbidding evil, helping one another in righteousness and piety, helping the needy, visiting their gatherings, and other than this which everyone can do. And if he is a person of knowledge, then it becomes more binding upon him to mix with the people to correct them. But some other scholars have given preference to isolation because through it one can safeguard his Deen."

[al-Kawaakib al-Duraaree (1/110-111)]

Shaikh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen الله عليه السلام, said: "Seclusion is good when there is evil in mixing (with people) but if there is no fear of evil, then mixing with them is better. The Prophet ﷺ said: **“A Believer that lives with people and endures their harm with patience is better than the person who does not mix with them nor endure their harm with patience.”**

[Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2507) and Sunan Ibn Maajah (4032) and graded as "Saheeh" by Shaikh al-Albaanee]

But if mixing is harmful to your Deen, then escape with your Religion as the Prophet ﷺ had said: **“A time will soon come when the best property of a Muslim will be sheep which he will graze on the tops of mountains and the places where rain falls, fleeing to protect his religion from afflictions.”** That is, he would flee with his Deen from trials."

[Sharh Riyad al-Saaliheen of Shaikh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen (3/72-73)]

Shaikh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen الله عليه السلام, also said: "You must know that the best person is a Believer that lives with the people and exercises patience on their harm. He is better than a believer who does not live with them and does not patiently bear their harm. Nevertheless, there are instances when it will be more desirable for one to withdraw himself from people than to mix with them. If a person fears tribulation for himself; for instance, if one is in a country where the government wants the people to forsake their religion or wants the people to support an innovation (in the Deen). In addition, if he is in a place where sin is the order of the day or where he fears falling into prohibitions and similar instances, then seclusion may be the best option. Hence, one must leave a Land of Disbelief for a Land of Islaam and migrates from a land of evil to a righteous country.

Another reason for moving into seclusion is a negative change in the condition of the people. It has been authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said: **“A time will soon come when the best property of a Muslim will be sheep which he will graze on the tops of mountains and the places where rain falls, fleeing to protect his religion from afflictions.”**

So, this is the distinction; seclusion becomes desirable if there is evil and tribulation in mixing with people. Otherwise, the basic principle is that mixing with people is better. In doing this, he can command them to do good and forbid them from evil, he can call them to the truth and explain the Sunnah to them. This is best.

However, if he cannot extend his forbearance in the face of tribulation, then that he isolates himself from people is better even it implies moving his worship to mountaintop or valleys.”

[Sharh Riyaadh al-Saaliheen (3/509-510)]